



THE POWER OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES

Intibucá, one of the departments in Honduras known for its rich vegetable production, is home to brave indigenous Lenca farmers like Francisco Mejía. For years, he faced the ups and downs of agriculture without any technical assistance. With the constant risks of crop damage from pests and low market prices. Despite his efforts, he was only able to harvest 2.6 kilos of tomatoes per square meter and 10 units of green peppers.

Due to pest damage, he lost 12,000 US Dollars, and his son Oscar considered emigrating. However, Francisco discovered the concept of protected agriculture: "iDE Honduras introduced me to the idea of a shade house, and it truly touched my heart. Then, I received technical assistance and an irrigation system that improved my income. My family and I decided we would make sacrifices and adopt that technology," he added with determination.



Thanks to protected agriculture, Francisco not only doubled his tomato yield but also quadrupled his green pepper production, since the harvest cycle lasts much longer: "In open fields, the most I ever sold was 2.3 US Dollars per square meter, but with the shade house, I doubled that. With those profits, I installed another shade house and built a water storage tank," he explained, with his voice filled with satisfaction.

Moreover, the savings were significant: "Before, I used 3.5 gallons of water per square meter for every irrigation and four liters of pesticides. Now, I only use half of those." The most rewarding aspect has been the response from the market: "Buyers appreciate the quality and healthiness of my product, which allows me to obtain higher prices. If Tropical Storm Sara had hit me while I was still cultivating in open fields, I would have lost my crop."

Francisco's success has not only changed his life but has also inspired others: "Seeing my progress, five colleagues began to build their own shade houses. And my son Oscar, who once thought about emigrating from the country, has now given up that desire to go to the United States."

With his story, Francisco Mejía stands as an example of resilience and hope, demonstrating that through innovation and family solidarity, it is possible to change the course of life and contribute to the development of the community. His legacy is a sweet harvest that flourishes in the heart of Intibucá.